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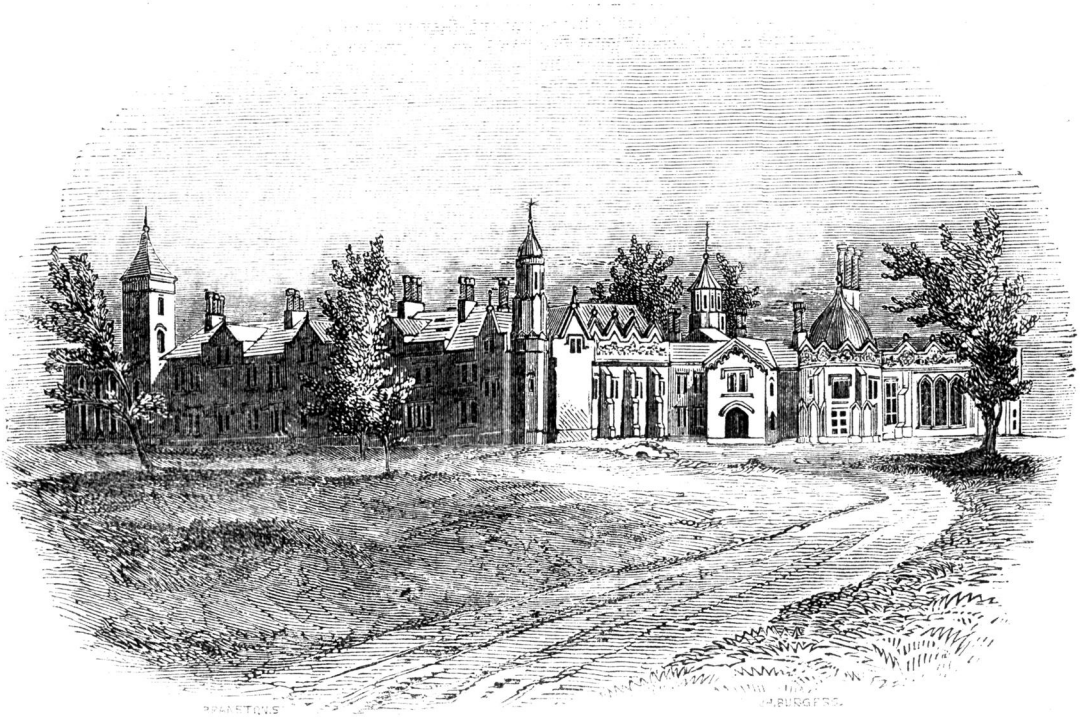
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# THE IRISH PENNY JOURNAL.

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VOLUME I.



ORMEAU, COUNTY OF DOWN, THE SEAT OF THE MARQUESS OF DONEGAL.

IN the selection of subjects for illustration in our Journal, there are none which we deem more worthy of attention, or which give us greater pleasure to notice, than the mansions of our resident nobility and gentry; and it is from this feeling chiefly that we have made choice of Ormeau, the fine seat of the Marquess of Donegal, as eminently deserving an early place among our topographical notices. Many finer places may indeed be seen in Ireland, belonging to noblemen, of equal or even inferior rank; but there are, unfortunately, few of these in which the presence of their lordly owners is so permanently to be found cementing the various classes of society together by the legitimate bond of a common interest, and attracting the respectful attachment of the occupiers and workers of the soil by the cheering parental encouragement which it is the duty of a proprietor to bestow.

Ormeau is situated on the east side of the river Lagan, above a mile south of Belfast.

The mansion, which, as our view of it will show, is an extensive pile of buildings in the Tudor style of architecture, was originally built as a cottage residence in the last century, and has since gradually approximated to its present extent and importance, befitting the rank of its noble proprietor, by subsequent additions and improvements. It has now several very noble apartments, and an extensive suite of offices and bed-rooms; but as an architectural composition, it is defective as a whole, from the want of some grand and elevated feature to give variety of form to its general outline, and re-

lieve the monotonous effect of so extensive a line of buildings of equal or nearly equal height.

The original residence of the family was situated in the town of Belfast, which may be said to have grown around it, and was a very magnificent castellated house, erected in the reign of James I. Its site was that now occupied by the fruit and vegetable markets, and it was surrounded by extensive gardens which covered the whole of the ground on which Donegal-place and the Linen Hall now stand. Of this noble mansion, however, there are no vestiges now remaining. It was burnt in the year 1708, by an accidental fire, caused by the carelessness of a female servant, on which occasion three daughters of Arthur, the third Earl of Donegal, perished in the flames; and though a portion of the building which escaped destruction was afterwards occupied for some years, the family finally removing to their present residence, its preservation was no longer necessary.

The demesne surrounding Ormeau is not of great extent, but the grounds are naturally of great pastoral beauty, commanding the most charming views of Belfast Lough and adjacent mountains, and have received all the improvements that could be effected by art, guided by the refined taste of its accomplished proprietress.

We have only to add, that ready access to this beautiful demesne is freely given to all respectable strangers—a privilege of which visitors to the Athens of the North should not fail to avail themselves.

P.